

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An Internet Scanning System, which comprises:
 - a programmed bar code symbol reader for reading one or more URL-encoded bar code symbols printed on various types of media; and
 - an Internet terminal operably connectable to said bar code symbol reader, and the Internet by way of an Internet Service Provider (ISP);
 - whereby, when said bar code symbol reader reads each said URL-encoded bar code symbol, said Internet Scanning System is automatically connected to an Internet Server which is connected to the Internet and supports a Web-site having a World Wide Web (WWW) address specified by said read URL-encoded bar code symbol.
2. The Internet Scanning System of claim 1, wherein the bar code symbol reader may be a laser scanning bar code symbol reader, a CCD bar code symbol, or a Wand-type bar code symbol reader.
3. The Internet Scanning System of claim 1, wherein said URL-encoded bar code symbol is a truncated-type encoded symbol, having a very low height to length ratio,
4. The Internet Scanning System of claim 3, wherein said one or more URL-encoded PostNet symbols are printed on a single sheet or page of a Web-site guide, along with their corresponding human-readable URLs and Web-site content descriptions.
5. The Internet Scanning System of claim 1, wherein said Internet terminal comprises:
 - a computer system having a GUI-based web browser program; and
 - said programmed bar code symbol scanner is interfaced with said computer system for automatically surfing to Web-sites listed in a Web-site guide by simply scanning corresponding URL-encoded bar code symbols printed on the pages thereof.

6. The Internet Scanning System of claim 1, wherein said Internet terminal comprises an interactive web-based television system having an audio-visual display monitor for displaying graphical and audio information content of Web-sites, and a portable Internet surfing device having said bar code symbol reader integrated therewith.

7. An Internet Scanning System of claim 1, wherein said Internet terminal comprises a Scanner Integrated Terminal having an integrated GUI-based web browser program, display panel, keypad, and said programmed bar code symbol reader.

8. An Internet Scanning System, which comprises:

a programmed optical character reader for reading one or more URLs printed on various types of media; and

an Internet terminal operably connectable to said programmed optical character reader, and the Internet by way of an Internet Service Provider (ISP);

whereby, when said programmed optical character reader reads each said URL, said Internet Scanning System is automatically connected to an Internet Server which is connected to the Internet and supports a Web-site having a World Wide Web (WWW) address specified by said read URL.

9. The Internet Scanning System of claim 8, wherein the programmed optical character reader may be a laser scanning optical character.

10. The Internet Scanning System of claim 8, wherein said one or more URLs are printed on a single sheet or page of a Web-site guide, along with their corresponding human-readable URLs and Web-site content descriptions.

11. The Internet Scanning System of claim 8, wherein said Internet terminal comprises a computer system having a GUI-based web browser program; and said programmed optical character reader is interfaced with said computer system for automatically surfing to Web-sites listed in a Web-site guide by simply reading corresponding URLs printed on the pages thereof.

12. The Internet Scanning System of claim 8, wherein said Internet terminal comprises an interactive web-based television system having an audio-visual display monitor for displaying graphical and audio information content of Web-sites, and a portable Internet surfing device having said Internet reader integrated therewith.

13. An Internet Scanning System of claim 8, wherein said Internet terminal comprises a Scanner Integrated Terminal having an integrated GUI-based web browser program, display panel, keypad, and said programmed optical character reader.

14. A Web-site guide comprising:

one or more sheets with a plurality of URL-encoded bar code symbols printed thereon.

15. The Internet Scanning System of Claim 1, wherein said bar code symbol reader has a scan field, and said system further comprises an optically transparent scanning plate extending from said bar code symbol reader and disposed within said scanfield, for aligning said URL-encoded bar code symbol with said scan field.

16. The Internet Scanning System of Claim 15, wherein said bar code symbol reader is an automatic laser scanning bar code symbol reader having an object detection field spatially coincident with at least a portion of said scan field.

17. The Internet Scanning System of Claim 15, wherein each said URL-encoded bar code symbol is a truncated bar code symbol.